

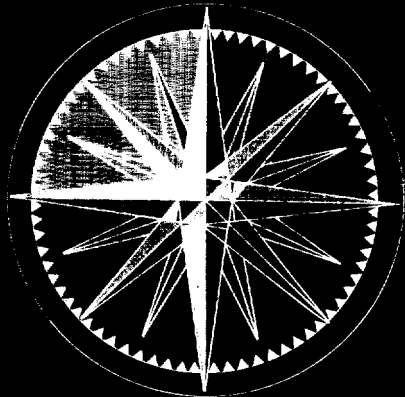
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SPECIAL REPORT

DE GAULLE, EUROPE, AND THE MLF

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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DE GAULLE, EUROPE, AND THE MLF

De Gaulle's grand design for Europe involves the creation of a loose confederation of states capable of providing its own nuclear defense and determining its own destiny. Essential to such a confederation would be the closest of Franco-German collaboration in all fields. In De Gaulle's view such an arrangement does not exclude an alliance with the US and the UK; the UK could be a member of the European confederation if it were willing to give up its special relationship with the US. But it does involve an end to direct US political and military controls in European defense matters and the end of NATO in its present form.

Only when Europe can stand on its own will it be possible, in De Gaulle's view, to take the necessary diplomatic, political, and economic measures to draw Eastern Europe and Russia eventually back into the comity of the European family and civilization.

The current controversy over Western economic and military cooperation, which has brought to a head the question of continued French participation in the European Economic Community and the Atlantic Alliance, must be viewed in the context of De Gaulle's grand design. From the outset, he has viewed the MLF basically as an American effort to prevent the European countries--particularly Germany--from developing a European deterrent independent of US control. Should indirect threats to take stringent action against the EEC and NATO fail to block the MLF, he is probably prepared to end effective participation in both organizations, confident that the protection of the US "nuclear umbrella" will continue.

De Gaulle's Strategy

Until very recently De Gaulle seemed content to dismiss the MLF as an impractical dream. When he returned from South America in October, however, the proposal seemed to be approach-

ing agreement. Since then, French opposition has become increasingly open and positive.

Nevertheless, France is anxious not to emphasize unnecessarily its divergence from its European partners on this question.

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MLF plans have provided a delay that gives De Gaulle a chance to mobilize European opinion against the MLF; and his threat to withdraw from the EEC stands as a grim reminder to his partners that he is prepared to take drastic steps if necessary.

Paris has mounted a frontal attack on the MLF. Both Foreign Minister Couve de Murville and Prime Minister Pompidou in major speeches have made it clear that France considers it inimical to the interests of Europe. De Gaulle charges that the MLF is designed to prevent the emergence of a self-contained Europe by destroying the power base inherent in an autonomous military policy. The French believe there is no prospect of an eventual US withdrawal from the MLF or a surrendering of US veto rights in the event a European political authority is established. European subservience would thus be perpetuated.

Should the MLF actually come into being, it is not certain what course of action De Gaulle would take. He might "withdraw" from the EEC, arguing that if Europe does not seek the maximum "Europeanization" of its defenses, all European institutions and projects lose their meaning. If Germany had meanwhile found a way around the grain-price issue, the decision to withdraw would probably be very difficult, but not insurmountable. De Gaulle might also take actions against NATO calculated to hasten its disintegration.

Withdrawal From the EEC

While De Gaulle has always advocated a European grouping as a power base to promote his policies, he is not wedded to the existing EEC institutions. Since his long-range goal is not a Europe of the Six but one extending "from the Atlantic to the Urals," he probably feels he can afford to see the current framework vanish, to be replaced in time by a structure less "rigidly integrationist" in form.

There has been no attempt to specify the exact form which a French "withdrawal" from the EEC would take. The EEC treaty makes no provision for withdrawal, and the French cannot legally block Community progress by preventing movement to the third and final stage of the 12-year transitional period provided by the EEC treaty. Nevertheless, as a minimum, France could refuse to participate actively in the decision-making processes of the Community.

The French will give due weight to the economic gains they have won since the Common Market was formed in 1958. Their agricultural exports to the EEC countries have expanded, and French farm interests are looking to further expansion after the common agricultural policy is worked out. The stake of French industry in the Common Market is reflected in trade figures which show a 171-percent increase in France's trade with its EEC partners since the

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